PART 16 Incomplete Cases

Note: This chapter is not applicable to HB/LHA only cases. HB cases should follow the HB methodology for incomplete cases. This chapter is also applicable to SP official error only checks

Contents

ESA/JSA/SPC
DEADLINE FOR INCOMPLETE CASES
Casepaper/Verint call not produced
Missing Casepaper
Missing evidence
OBTAINING EVIDENCE FOR CASES
Technical Preview stage
Evidence requests
OFFICIAL ERROR CHECK STAGE
Case incomplete with AGA
Cases awaiting arbitration
HANDOFFS
Hand off between MRO that conducts the visit and MRO who performs the official error check
Hand off between MRO who performed the official error check and ECO/PCP
Evidence received by ECO/PCP
PM action upon receipt of evidence
Death of a Claimant
DEEMED ERRORS
Exceptions
Evidence of Identity
WFIs - ESA, JSA (partners)
Fraud/Compliance referrals
EFFECT OF DEEMED ERRORS
State Pension
ESA/JSA/SPC

Deadline for incomplete cases

16000 The delivery business will provide the incomplete evidence at the earliest opportunity enabling you to operate continuous mop-up. However the absolute deadline and the date at which errors will be deemed for official error will be 10 weeks following your request for the evidence/information. Any national holidays falling into this period will extend it by the applicable no. of lost working days.

Casepaper/Verint call not produced

16001 For cases on the original sample list available to JCP offices/pension centres the deadline for them to supply the claim will be calculated from the date the sample list is available to the office. CIT notify relevant stakeholders when the sample list is available on FREDA.

16002 For any case requested as a replacement after the original sample list, the deadline will be calculated from the date that the replacement case is requested by you.

16003 However, for ESA, JSA and SPC, where a case has been referred to Fraud/Compliance, the deadline will be 10 weeks following the completion of the Fraud/Compliance action.

16004 Where the case is held by Fraud for investigation purposes, you will accept copies of the claim documentation. It is recommended that paperwork for sample cases held by FES, including the original claim and any supporting documents/sub-files should be copied and copies supplied to you. This will prevent deemed errors arising due to delays or unavailability of documentation.

Missing Casepaper

16005 The PM definition of a missing case paper is:-

- Where the benefit paying office presents no evidence at all and is unable to locate a case paper; or
- Where the benefit paying office presents an actual case paper but with no documents to support the current award
Missing evidence

16006 The deadline for the office to supply missing evidence will be calculated from the date that you request the missing evidence. Where evidence requested from the office is supplied, and the production of the requested evidence leads to you making a new request for evidence, a new deadline is set from the date of the new request.

16007 Where a case paper is presented with some documentation to support the existence of the current award but not all the evidence that is required for checking purposes, this would be classed as missing evidence.

16012-16019

The following paragraphs refer to the MRO conducting the technical preview and subsequent visit.

16020 A case can only be classed as incomplete where it is not possible for the official error check to be conducted following your handoff to the MRO conducting the official error check.

16021 If, during the technical preview, you identify missing evidence that is required by the MRO performing the official error check, you will attempt to obtain this information at the review or via the MRO performing the official error check ask the ECO/PCP to obtain the required information.

Note: this will also include situations where the whole case paper is missing.

16022 Where you identify evidence that the claimant will not be able to provide at the review for example, completion of the Habitual Residence Test (HRT) you will provide details of the evidence required pending the handoff with the MRO performing the official error check.

16023 You will provide details of the evidence required to the MRO performing the official error check at the handoff, as this will form part of the evidence check conducted by the MRO performing the official error check.

16024 - 16029

Obtaining evidence for cases
Technical Preview stage

16030 While conducting the technical preview you will identify all evidence to be obtained from the claimant at the review, and retain in the PM docs.

16031 On completion of the review you should detail the action taken at the review and evidence obtained from the claimant in relation to that which was identified, along with any other further evidence and/or details of why the required evidence could not be provided. This should include the issue of the relevant standard letter.

Evidence requests

16032 You will hand all evidence to the MRO who performs the official error check as they form part of the 100% evidence check. The MRO who performs the official error check will then detail for the ECO/PCP the evidence required.

16033 Any evidence, which has not been obtained, should be detailed fully on FREDA

16034 - 16039

Official Error Check stage

The following paragraphs refer to the MRO conducting the official error check

16040 You will conduct 100% evidence and technical preview check on the cases provided by the MRO who conducted the visit.

16041 Where you identify evidence that the MRO conducting the visit has failed to obtain then you should return the case to the MRO who conducted the visit and, if necessary, a notified re-visit will be made.

Note: where a notified re-visit is required the MRO who performs the official error check will inform the ECO/PCP. The team leader will be responsible for arranging for a team member to conduct the notified re-visit as a matter of priority.

16042 Where you identify incomplete evidence that the MRO conducting the visit would not have been able to obtain from the claimant, you will contact the ECO/PCP to obtain the evidence required. The evidence should be obtained by the deadline for incomplete cases.
16043 Any aspect of the check, which has not been cleared, should be shown clearly in FREDA. The check will be left incomplete only in respect of the un-cleared aspect(s).

16044 The case will be shown on FREDA as incomplete, unless a payment error is subsequently raised on a cleared aspect or is cleared as correct on production of the requested evidence.

**Case incomplete with AGA**

16045 Where it has not been possible to clear the check because the case has been submitted to AGA for advice the case will be recorded as `incomplete with AGA`.

16046 Such a case will not default to a deemed error, and will be excluded from the final report until such time as the check can be cleared.

16047 - 16049

**Cases awaiting arbitration**

16050 Where a payment error has been raised on a case, and the office have disputed this error, the case will be shown as `incomplete with PM` until the arbitration on the case has been cleared.

16051 Such a case will not default to a deemed error, and will be excluded from the final report until such time as the arbitration decision is issued.

16052 - 16059

**Handoffs**

**Hand off between MRO that conducts the visit and MRO who performs the official error check**

16060 On completion of the review and recommended categorisation the MRO that conducts the visit will be responsible for arranging the hand off of all cases to the MRO who performs the official error check.

*Note: this will include cases where the MRO that conducts the visit has requested that the ECO/PCP obtain further information/verification.*
16061 The nature of the hand off will be dependant on the location of the MRO who performs the official error check at the time. The hand off will be:

- Face to face where the MRO that conducts the visit and MRO who performs the official error check are at the same location
- Via courier post where the MRO performing the official error check is conducting their action remotely

*Note: the ECO/PCP must be informed where the cases are to be couriered to a different location*

Hand off between MRO who performed the official error check and ECO/PCP

16062 The ECO/PCP will be provided with an evidence request, in respect of each case on the incomplete list. This request will be in the form of an email from the MRO who performs the official error check to the ECO/PCP to notify them that there are entries on FREDA that require ECO/PCP action. The specific reason that the case has been left as incomplete should be stated clearly.

16063 FREDA should be noted that the case is incomplete and if any further incomplete aspect has arisen as a result of the MRO’s official error check on the case, FREDA should be updated.

16064– 16069

Evidence received by ECO/PCP

16070 The ECO/PCP will forward any evidence received to you at the earliest opportunity.

16071 The MRO who performs the official error check must ensure that they are given a recommended categorisation from the MRO who conducted the visit before completing the final categorisation.

16072 On completion of the check the MRO who performs the official error check will ensure that FREDA is updated.

16073 - 16079
PM action upon receipt of evidence

The following section refers to the MRO performing the official error check

16080 You will take the following action where evidence is provided by the deadline for incomplete cases:

- Examine the case and evidence provided as soon as available in case further queries arise
- You will check the aspect originally left incomplete and enter the results on FREDA
- Where an official payment error is identified, you will record an error which will be passed to the ECO/PCP/Jobcentre contact for agreement

16081 Where, in the process of examining the evidence provided, a further query arises in relation to this, you will contact the ECO/PCP to provide the evidence required. The deadline for provision of this subsequently identified incomplete evidence will be 10 weeks from the request.

16082 Where, in the PM process of examining the evidence provided, you realise that you omitted to ask for some essential piece of evidence you will contact AGA, or in their absence, the team leader, for advice as to whether the case can be left incomplete for a further period.

Death of a Claimant

16083 Where information is required to clear a check and the claimant dies, and this information is only available from the next of kin or family members the case will be abandoned.

16084 - 16089

Deemed Errors

16090 Where the original or reconstructed claim/application documents have not been provided by the deadline a deemed error will be recorded. This is because, without the original or reconstructed claim/application documents, a payment error cannot be ruled out.

Note: for all benefits, if a payment error would not result from the further information requested (e.g. case left incomplete for sight of Social Fund deduction documentation) the case will be recorded as cleared.
16091 Deemed errors will be raised using the error code framework, this will enable FEMA to be able to attribute a monetary value to the deemed error using the error code entered onto FREDA.

16092 PM will notify the ECO/PCP in respect of every incomplete case subsequently recorded as a deemed error

16093 The ECO/PCP/Jobcentre contact should agree or disagree the error, to the MRO no later than 14 days following the date of issue

Exceptions

16094 In the following circumstances a deemed error will not be raised:

Evidence of Identity

16095 Where the office has failed to verify the claimant’s and/or partner’s identity, the MRO will attempt to obtain this at the visit. If the MRO conducting the visit is unsuccessful in verifying the claimant’s and/or partner’s identity, a deemed error will not be appropriate. In these cases a whole award error will be recorded, which will count towards the district’s error value results.

WFIs - ESA, JSA (partners)

16096 For detailed methodology on WFIs please see Part 11. Deemed errors must not be recorded on WFI issues.

Fraud/Compliance referrals

16100 PM action will be as follows:

- For ESA/ JSA/SPC, if the MRO who performed the official error check has referred the case to Fraud and the extended deadline has not yet been reached, the case will continue to be tracked by the BST and will be recorded as High Suspicion Tracking on FREDA. A deemed error will not be recorded.

Note: the ECO/PCP must not attempt to pursue the required information/evidence/verification whilst the Fraud investigation is in progress.
Effect of deemed errors

16110 Deemed errors will be reported to the delivery business without an error value, however, deemed errors do affect MVE and MVFE calculations performed by FEMA. This is because in estimating the levels of fraud and error, FEMA assume that incomplete cases are as likely to have official error as cases that have been resolved but were at some point outstanding.

16111 Deemed errors will attract a notional MVE, which will be calculated by FEMA. This will be reported against resource account and the MVFE reported.

State Pension

16130 If the clerical papers are missing and the documents are less than 14 months old, districts will be expected to reconstruct the cases in accordance with existing procedures. If the papers are available but any relevant documentation is missing, where this is less than 14 months old, districts will be expected to obtain and reconstruct any relevant documentation setting out the claimant's circumstances. PM will examine the claim from the outset to ensure that all aspects of the claim form have been covered.

16131 When the case is more than 14 months old, and has been destroyed in line with retention guidance, documents will only be requested by PM if the required document(s) affect the award of benefit. Documents that do not affect the award (e.g. change of address, change in method of payment (MOP)) should not be requested by PM. If documents that affect the award are required, the CTG checker will leave the case as incomplete, recording the documentation as outstanding on the IOT tracking screen for the PCP to obtain. If the account was updated less than 14 months ago but the award is not affected, FREDA should be noted with the update date and the reason for it. The CTG checker will use NIRS 2 browser system and system records to perform the MVE check on the selected case.